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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/738,294	12/18/2000	Christopher Thompson	9-13528-144US	2143

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EXAMINER
CHUONG, TRUC T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2174	

DATE MAILED: 03/29/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	09/738,294	THOMPSON ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Truc T Chuong	2174	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *07 January 2004*.
2a)☒ This action is **FINAL**.　　　2b)☐ This action is non-final.
3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-23* is/are pending in the application.
　　　4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6)☒ Claim(s) *1-23* is/are rejected.
7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10)☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.
　　　Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
　　　Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
　　　a)☐ All　b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:
　　　　　1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
　　　　　2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
　　　　　3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
　　　* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1)☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2)☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3)☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
　　　Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4)☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
　　　Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5)☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6)☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1.   This communication is responsive to Amendment A, filed 01/07/04.

2.   Claims 1-23 are pending in this application. Claim 1 is an independent claim. In

Amendment A, claim 1, 7, 14, and 21 are amended, and claims 22 and 23 are new claims. This

action is made final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in
> section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are
> such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person
> having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the
> manner in which the invention was made.

4.   Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang et al.

(U.S. Patent No. 5,793,365) in view of Klein et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,995,492).

As to claim 1, Tang teaches a method of initiating communications using a persistent

virtual team environment instantiated by a collaboration services suite for facilitating

collaboration between members of a team, the method comprising steps of:

providing a graphical interface adapted to enable a person to interact with the virtual team

environment to select each one of: a personal identifier associated with a respective team

member; and one of a plurality of different types of communications (col. 3 lines 32-41, col. 4

lines 14-28, identification information, col. 11 lines 38-45, a user logs on, col. 14 lines 64-66);

and initiating a new communications session using the selected personal identifier and type of

the communications (the gallery window 10 may further reflect whether there are any new data items 26 have been added to the object shelf 24 or any new text discussion, sic, col. 9 lines 63-67, most recent update, col. 11 lines 1-3, col. 12 lines 9-20 and figs. 1A, 5-6, and 8); although Tang mentions using telephones in his invention (col. 6 lines 47-50), Tang does not clearly show in details how each member of the team communicates over at least a Switched Telephone Network (STN). Klein clearly shows virtual switching point in a public switched telephone (col. 17 lines 64-67, col. 18 lines 1-28 and fig. 1) to switch from one telephone to a different telephone. It would have been obvious at the time of the invention that a person with ordinary skill in the art would want to have Klein's virtual switching feature in Tang's communication devices in order to provide an ultimate implementation when user can manually control virtual switches.

As to claim 2, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the types of communications comprise: 1-way messaging (error message, col. 14 lines 46-52); 2-way messaging; voice; and multi-media (col. 13 lines 1-12, col. 14 lines 18). Klein clearly shows virtual switching point in a public switched telephone (col. 17 lines 64-67, col. 18 lines 1-28 and fig. 1) to switch from one telephone to a different telephone. It would have been obvious at the time of the invention that a person with ordinary skill in the art would want to have Klein's virtual switching feature in Tang's communication devices in order to provide an ultimate implementation when user can manually control virtual switches.

As to claim 3, Tang teaches inherently a method as claimed in claim 2, wherein 1-way messaging comprises one or more of paging because Tang's operating environment uses video, audio, microphone, email, and the like in communications between team members (col. 13 lines

5-12, col. 14 lines 15-18, and figs. 3, 5-6, and 8); therefore, users can setup the email to page

them whenever new messages or important news arrive to their personal devices such as: PDAs,

cellular phones, pagers, or the like.

As to claim 4, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 2, wherein 2-way messaging

comprises instant messaging (error message, col. 14 lines 46-50, reflect status, col. 5 lines 59-

61).

As to claim 5, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 2, wherein multi-media

communications comprises one or more of: document sharing, and application sharing (col. 3

lines 59-67).

As to claim 6, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the graphical

interface comprises at least one communications type icon representative of a respective type of

communications (icon, col. 5 lines 20-28 and figs. 1A-5).

As to claim 7, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 6, wherein each

communications type icon is associated with the personal identifier of the respective team

member, and representative of a respective type of communications in which the team member is

available to participate (topic of discussion, col. 3 lines 59-67, and figs. 5-9).

As to claim 8, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the graphical

interface is adapted to enable simultaneous selection of both the personal identifier and the type

of communications by selecting one of the at least one communications type icons associated

with the personal identifier (figs. 3, 5, and 7).

As to claim 9, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the graphical

interface comprises a menu for listing each one of the plurality of different types of

communications, the graphical interface being adapted to enable selection of one of the plurality

of different types of communications from the menu (col. 8 lines 29-51 and fig. 3).

As to claim 10, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a step of

opening a communications initiation window in response to selection of either one or both of the

personal identifier and the type of communications (figs 5 and 7).

As to claim 11, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the

communications initiation window is adapted to permit the person to enter a description of a

topic associated with the communications (fig. 9).

As to claim 12, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the

communications initiation window is adapted to enable the person to send a communications

initiation request to the collaboration services suite (col. 14 lines 59-67, and col. 15 lines 1-13).

As to claim 13, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 12 wherein the

communications initiation request includes the personal identifier of the team member to be

invited to join the communication, and information concerning the selected type of

communications to be initiated (sharing information and specific topic between workgroup

members, col. 3 lines 65-67, and col. 4 lines 1-10).

As to claim 14, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of

initiating the new communications session comprises the steps of:

using the personal identifier to send an invitation to the respective team member inviting

the team member to join the communications session; receiving an invitation response from the

respective team member, the invitation response representing whether or not the respective team

member accepts the invitation; and if the respective team member accepts the invitation,

establishing the communications session with the team member, using the personal identifier and the selected communications type because Tang's operating environment uses email and other communication devices (see claim 3 above) in communications between team members; therefore, meeting requests or an invitation along with a topic of discussion can be sent out to the team members, and the requester, who sent the invitation, will receive team members' replications.

As to claim 15, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the step of sending an invitation comprises the steps of:

using the personal identifier to select a respective team member profile associated with the team member, the team member profile comprising communications preference information defining preferences of the team member for participating in communications with other members of the team using at least one of a plurality of different communications devices (identifying information, col. 11 lines 37-45);

selecting a communications device associated with the team member for receiving the invitation; and forwarding the invitation to the team member using the selected communications device (note the rejection of claim 14 above).

As to claim 16, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 15, wherein the step of selecting a communications device comprises a step of searching the team member profile (identifying information, add/remove user icons, and search chat room directory, col. 11 lines 41-65) for communications information concerning a preferred text communications device (text chat application, col. 12 lines 63-66 and figs. 5 and 9).

Application/Control Number: 09/738,294

Art Unit: 2174

As to claim 17, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising, when communications information concerning a preferred text communications device is located (Tang's system concerns about physical location of team members along with hardware, computer type, and the like, col. 3 lines 53-58), a step of selecting the preferred text communications device as the selected communications device for receiving the invitation (select text communication device of figs. 3 and 5).

As to claim 18, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the step of forwarding the invitation to the team member comprises the steps of:

formulating a text-based invitation message suitable for display by the selected communications device (text string depending on the level of hardware support available to each worker, the network bandwidth available, and the level of privacy each worker desires, col. 5 lines 23-43); and

sending the text-based invitation message to the selected communications device (see claim 14 above).

As to claim 19, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising, when communications information concerning a preferred text communications device is not located, the steps of:

searching the team member profile for communications information concerning a preferred voice communications device (col. 8 lines 13-28); and

if information concerning the preferred voice communications device is located, selecting the preferred voice communications device as the selected communications device for receiving the invitation (col. 8 lines 13-28, and see claim 14 above).

As to claim 20, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the step of forwarding the invitation to the team member comprises the steps of:

forwarding session information concerning the invitation to an interactive voice response (IVR) interface of the collaboration service suite (audio input and microphone, col. 13 lines 1-12);

establishing a voice communications between the IVR interface and the team member using the selected communications device (col. 11 lines 14-23); and

announcing information concerning the invitation to the team member using the IVR interface (the conversations between team members in text messages of fig. 5 can be voice messages according to audio and microphone as mentioned above).

As to claim 21, Tang teaches a method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of initiating the new communications session comprises the steps of:

using the personal identifier to send an invitation to the respective team member inviting the team member to join the communication session (identifying information, col. 11 lines 37-45);

receiving an invitation response from the respective team member, the invitation response representing whether or not the respective team member accepts the invitation (Tang's operating environment uses email and other communication devices (see claim 3 above) in communications between team members; therefore, meeting requests or an invitation along with a topic of discussion can be sent out to the team members, and the requester, who sent the invitation, will receive team members' replications.); and

if the respective team member accepts the invitation, establishing the communications session with the team member, using the personal identifier and the selected communications type (col. 8 lines 13-28, and see claim 14 above).

As to claim 22, it is similar in scope to claim 1 above except a packet network. Tang teaches a packer network (network interface 113, col. 11 lines 37-57).

5.   Claim 23 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,793,365) in view of Klein et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,995,492) as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Lane (U.S. Patent No. 5,437,009).

As to claim 23, Tang et al. in view of Klein et al. teach the team communicates and availability information over at least a Switched Telephone Network (STN) (note the rejection of claim 1 above); however, Tang and Klein do not show a steps of monitoring Common Channel System (CCS) Signaling of the STN. Lane clearly provides this feature (CCS, col. 1 lines 13-50). It would have been obvious at the time of the invention that a person with ordinary skill in the art would want to have Lane's CCS network in Tang's communication devices in view of Klein's virtual switching feature devices in order to increase the efficiency of the analysis by providing a logical shrinking of the data through any network-wide communication (col. 7 lines 4-18).

Response to Arguments

6.   Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this

final action.

Conclusion

7.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to Truc T Chuong whose telephone number is 703-305-5753. The

examiner can normally be reached on M-Th and alternate Fridays 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM.

     If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Kristine L. Kincaid can be reached on 703-308-0640. The fax phone number for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

     Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent

Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications

may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR

system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Truc T. Chuong

03/11/04

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